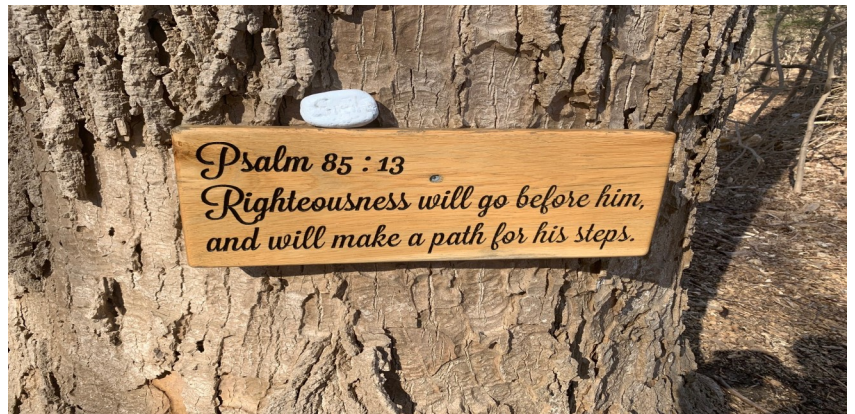


**“The Owen Challenge”  
At Grace Church  
(from Pentecost 2021  
to Pentecost 2022)**



Over the last year and a half, Bethany and I have been walking Owen behind First Church on their “Prayer Trail”. Situated along the way on four trees, are four Scripture readings that are related to walking paths with God. For many months we would stop and read them to Owen, and at the end of the Scripture, Owen would say, “Amen!”. One day, about a year into our walks, we walked up to this first reading (above) from Psalm 85:13 and he said “read it”, and so I started to point to it so he could follow the letters...and as I did that Owen started to say “Psalm 85:13, Righteousness will go before him...” Apparently during all our walks and readings, Owen had memorized ALL four Scripture readings! In addition, later on, we also realized he had memorized three other readings in a night time book (*5 Minute Bedtime Stories*) that we read to him. It was not long after of this that I had a thought: If Owen, a 3-year-old, can memorize seven passages from Holy Scripture in a year, then surely the people of Grace Church could do at least the same! And so I present you...”The Owen Challenge”!

From today, Pentecost 2021 through Pentecost 2022, I challenge the people of Grace Church to take time in their lives to reach out to God in Christ through the Holy Spirit, and to dig deeper into their faith walk, by working to memorize various passages of Holy Scripture. As a starting point, I offer you two lists to work from, or you can create your own. The first list is the 7 passages that Owen has memorized. The second list of 12 passages is one that I created based on what I think are some very important readings in the Bible. Whatever way you want to join in the “Owen Challenge”, just try to find time over the next year to memorize some Holy Scripture! Whether it is one verse a week or one verse a month, the hope is that by next Pentecost, without thinking, the Word of God will flow freely from your lips as it did on the day of Pentecost 2000 years ago.

As an additional way to “walk” with you all through the Owen Challenge, and to offer ongoing encouragement, feel free to sign up at the church to an email list so that I can message you once a month to offer prayer and encouragement along the path, as well as to engage with any of you who want to share how the journey of memorizing has gone for you. I look forward to many of you joining Owen, Bethany and me on the path of walking the path of Jesus through the Scriptures.

Yours in Christ,